

In the Claims

Please amend claims 1 and 14. Please add new claims 16-27. Pending claims 1-27 follow:

1. (Currently Amended) A microwaveable pasta product comprising:

a dried pasta product; and

a microwaveable container comprising a single bowl having a generally-ovular bottom and a generally-ovular outer wall in generally-perpendicular relation to the circumference of the generally-ovular bottom, wherein the bottom and outer wall together define a cavity in which the dried pasta product is contained, and a lip extending around the bowl in a generally perpendicular relation to a top of the generally ovular outer wall, the generally ovular outer wall including two generally curved side walls and two generally straight end walls, wherein a protrusion extends outward from the generally straight end walls below the lip.

2. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the cavity has a length to width ratio of at least about 1.2:1.

3. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the cavity has a length to width ratio of at least about 1.3:1.

4. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the cavity is generally symmetrical.

5. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the cavity has a length ranging from about 6 inches to about 10 inches.

6. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 5, wherein the cavity has a width ranging from about 5 inches to about 8 inches.

7. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the cavity has a length ranging from about 7 inches to about 9 inches.

8. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 7, wherein the cavity has a width ranging from about 5.5 inches to about 6.5 inches.

9. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the area of the cavity varies over the height of the cavity.

10. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the circumference of the bottom is curved.

11. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the container has a thickness less than about 0.4 inch.

12. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the container has a thickness less than about 0.3 inch.

13. (Original) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the container consists essentially of a bowl having a thickness less than about 0.4 inch.

14. (Currently Amended) A method for preparing a pasta product comprising:
providing a dried pasta product in a single microwaveable container having a generally-ovular bottom, a generally-ovular outer wall in generally-perpendicular relation to the circumference of the generally-ovular bottom, wherein the generally ovular outer wall includes two generally curved side walls and two generally straight end walls, a lip extending around the bowl in a generally perpendicular relation to a top of the generally ovular outer wall, and a protrusion extending outward from the generally straight end walls below the lip, wherein the bottom and outer wall together define a cavity in which the dried pasta product is contained, and a top that covers the cavity;

removing the top from the microwaveable container;

introducing water into the cavity of the container; and

exposing the dried pasta product and water in the container without the top to microwave energy to produce a cooked pasta product.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising pouring a sauce over the cooked pasta product.

16. (New) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the generally-ovular outer wall includes:

a rounded corner joining the generally-ovular outer wall to the generally-ovular bottom;

a first generally straight region extending from the rounded corner at a first angle relative to the rounded corner; and

a second generally straight region extending from the first bottom region at a second angle relative to the first bottom region.

17. (New) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 16, the first angle being an obtuse angle of about 110° to about 130°.

18. (New) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 16, the second angle being an obtuse angle of about 150° to about 170°.

19. (New) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 16, the second angle being greater than the first angle.

20. (New) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the protrusion provides a space of about 0.1 inch to about 0.4 inch between the lips of nested, similar containers.

21. (New) The microwaveable pasta product of claim 1, wherein the end walls are shorter than the side walls.

22. (New) The method of claim 14, the generally-ovular outer wall including:

a rounded corner joining the generally-ovular outer wall to the generally-ovular bottom;

a first generally straight region extending from the rounded corner at a first angle relative to the rounded corner; and

a second generally straight region extending from the first bottom region at a second angle relative to the first bottom region.

23. (New) The method of claim 22, the first angle being an obtuse angle of about 110° to about 130°.

24. (New) The method of claim 22, the second angle being an obtuse angle of about 150° to about 170°.

25. (New) The method of claim 22, the second angle being greater than the first angle.

26. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the protrusion provides a space of about 0.1 inch to about 0.4 inch between lips of nested, similar containers.

27. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the end walls are shorter than the side walls.